

# Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Building Permits* Statistics Users Respondent Base

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U.S. Census Bureau  
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

## I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

### (1) Monthly

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0.2%;	1	None
48.4%;	206	Retail Sales
30.3%;	129	Wholesale Trade
35.9%;	153	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
69.0%;	294	Housing Starts
100.0%;	426	Building Permits
57.7%;	246	New Home Sales
50.2%;	214	Value of New Construction Put in Place
39.4%;	168	Housing Completions
28.9%;	123	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
42.3%;	180	New Residential Construction
21.6%;	92	New Mobile Home Placements
28.9%;	123	Monthly Imports and Exports
27.5%;	117	Current Industrial Reports
32.2%;	137	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

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Replies 426; Forms 426

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### (2) Quarterly

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49.6%;	66	Quarterly Financial Report
77.4%;	103	Current Industrial Reports
6.8%;	9	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
17.3%;	23	Quarterly Tax Survey
8.3%;	11	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

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Replies 133; Forms 426

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### (3) Annual

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43.9%;	159	Annual Retail Trade
32.6%;	118	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
15.5%;	56	Annual Survey of Communications
21.8%;	79	Transportation Annual Survey
18.2%;	66	Service Annual Survey
55.2%;	200	County Business Patterns

31.2%;	113	ZIP Code Business Patterns
28.5%;	103	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
37.6%;	136	Characteristics of New Housing
75.7%;	274	Annual Building Permits
38.4%;	139	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
21.3%;	77	Annual Capital Expenditures
45.0%;	163	Annual Survey of Manufactures
30.7%;	111	Current Industrial Reports
9.7%;	35	Research and Development Survey
19.6%;	71	Plant Capacity Utilization
6.9%;	25	Education Finance Survey
13.3%;	48	State Tax Collection Survey
4.4%;	16	Annual Public Employee Retirement
10.2%;	37	Annual Survey of Public Employment
12.4%;	45	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
20.7%;	75	State Government Finances
27.6%;	100	Annual Imports and Exports

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Replies 362; Forms 426

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## II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

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84.1%;	355	Printed Publications	12.3%;	52	FAX
68.0%;	287	World Wide Web (Internet)	10.7%;	45	Direct (E-mail) delivery
35.3%;	149	CD-ROMs	2.4%;	10	Regular mail
28.4%;	120	Diskettes	8.3%;	35	Other

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Replies 422; Forms 426

- EBB (of Stat-USA) Phone calls
- Newspaper
- Economic Bulletin Board
- from others in the organization we use ftp site extensively.
- News media
- Commerce Department Economic Bulletin Board
- News Services such as Bridge.
- tape (CPB)
- Electronic "Bulletin Boards"
- Check values by telephone
- also use microfiche in some cases.
- time-share vendor (private)
- Bulletin Board Commerce Dept.
- hard copy computer run
- Analytics
- Consultation w/colleagues who receive your material.
- News Services-Market News.
- DRI DATABASE
- Download from Bulletin Board.3
- Individual sources using census bureau data
- sec,Secondary Vendor (R
- Newswires

- Intermediate Data Vendor.3,4,6,
- Fax from Japanese media
- Stat-USA
- Tape, Cartridge
- Phone calls
- Overnight Delivery of NIA data
- CDROM & Publications in Library
- Fed Ex4,5
- FTP
- building permits printout
- By phone to construction statistics
- Subscribe to America Statistic Index on Microfiche
- STAT-USA+WEFA Group
- Download

(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

67.8%; 269 Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)  
 34.8%; 138 Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)  
 29.0%; 115 ASCII delimited  
 17.4%; 69 ASCII flat files  
 14.9%; 59 Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually  
 9.6%; 38 Do not manipulate data  
 3.0%; 12 Other

Replies 397; Forms 426

- download from www.Census.gov
- TSO files
- Your current format for Building Permit diskettes.
- acrobat
- Excel
- Don't know
- Also as text or word file
- Print from Windows Menu.
- Word Document
- Internet copy & paste
- SAS data sets
- We are not or the Internet

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

40.7%; 148 5	16.8%; 61 3	7.7%; 28 1
18.4%; 67 4	8.5%; 31 2	8.0%; 29 Don't know

Replies 364; Forms 426

(7) b. E-mail notification:

41.4%; 147 5	19.4%; 69 3	6.2%; 22 1
18.0%; 64 4	8.2%; 29 2	6.8%; 24 Don't know

Replies 355; Forms 426

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(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

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53.3%; 188 5	12.7%; 45 3	6.5%; 23 1
17.8%; 63 4	3.1%; 11 2	6.5%; 23 Don't know

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Replies 353; Forms 426

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(9) d. Search:

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64.8%; 245 5	9.5%; 36 3	2.1%; 8 1
18.5%; 70 4	1.6%; 6 2	3.4%; 13 Don't know

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Replies 378; Forms 426

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(10) e. Download complete data sets:

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66.8%; 252 5	11.1%; 42 3	2.1%; 8 1
14.3%; 54 4	2.4%; 9 2	3.2%; 12 Don't know

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Replies 377; Forms 426

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(11) f. Download selected data:

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75.7%; 296 5	5.4%; 21 3	0.8%; 3 1
14.3%; 56 4	1.8%; 7 2	2.0%; 8 Don't know

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Replies 391; Forms 426

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(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

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20.3%; 70 5	28.8%; 99 3	12.8%; 44 1
17.2%; 59 4	15.1%; 52 2	5.8%; 20 Don't know

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Replies 344; Forms 426

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(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

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28.5%; 101 5	19.4%; 69 3	14.4%; 51 1
18.3%; 65 4	14.4%; 51 2	5.1%; 18 Don't know

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Replies 355; Forms 426

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(14) i. Charts and graphs:

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26.0%; 94 5	23.3%; 84 3	16.9%; 61 1
15.8%; 57 4	14.4%; 52 2	3.6%; 13 Don't know

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Replies 361; Forms 426

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(15) j. Geographic maps:

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29.5%; 104 5	16.7%; 59 3	15.6%; 55 1
21.8%; 77 4	10.5%; 37 2	5.9%; 21 Don't know

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Replies 353; Forms 426

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(16) k. Other, please specify:

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76.0%; 19 electronic bulletin board                      24.0%; 6 Other

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Replies 25; Forms 426

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- Publications like QFR to be in spreadsheet format or mdb for easy data manipulation after downloading.
  - Dowlad selected data set according to state, regions, & metro areas
  - ACROBAT FILES, which you may include in item h.
  - Don't know if electronic bulletin board was used
  - Update full report at release time
  - Our office will probably not be on the Internet within the next five years.
- 

(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

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33.3%; 1 5                      0.0%; 0 3                      0.0%; 0 1  
33.3%; 1 4                      33.3%; 1 2                      0.0%; 0 Don't know

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Replies 3; Forms 426

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### III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

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30.3%; 122 No                      69.7%; 281 Yes

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Replies 403; Forms 426

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(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

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62.0%; 255 5+ years                      45.5%; 187 trends up to 1 year  
60.6%; 249 trends up to 5 years                      0.0%; 0 Other  
48.7%; 200 latest 1 or 2 periods

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Replies 411; Forms 426

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(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

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53.2%; 217 Create value-added products/services  
39.5%; 161 Perform patron/client inquiries  
27.9%; 114 Inform marketing decisions  
25.7%; 105 Republish in newspaper/journal  
21.8%; 89 Store reports/printouts for archival purposes  
20.6%; 84 Inform investment decisions  
9.8%; 40 Locate new sites  
0.2%; 1 Other

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Replies 408; Forms 426

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- Store data in database.

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(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

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74.2%; 297 Definition of terms  
54.2%; 217 Narrative text describing survey results  
52.5%; 210 Sampling and estimation methodology  
36.8%; 147 Survey design  
13.2%; 53 None  
1.2%; 5 Other

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Replies 400; Forms 426

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- Explanations of data changes/revisions
  - Direct contact with Census analysts
  - Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
  - Census Bureau Staff
  - Econometrics Analysis
- 

(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

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- We are very much interested in unadjusted counterparts of tables 7 & 8 of the FT900 release being made available on internet on the day of release. Publications like QFR also need to be made available in spreadsheet or mdb for us to further manipulate data.
- No. Increasingly more and more data sets are becoming available electronically-which makes our work easier by eliminating manual inputing of data.
- Regional retail sales estimates (cancelled after 1996)
- More local info. (PMSA at least)
- Non-residential building permit data.
- State/MSA non-residential construction data!
- Find it difficult to get info a local area ie. N.E., Urban, but not specific such as New York. Also, like annual building Permits in greater detail to states or county level.
- Finding historic data sets requires going to the library - It would be very helpful if 1980 census data was on the internet as well.
- Retail Trade Monthly - Regional Data Survey - Blue Pages, Building Permits - Non-Resident & Additions.
- I do not receive all the requests all the time.
- Retail sales for Central Business Districts; zip code retail sales, naufacturers, wholesale, etc; zip code housing data including rent and home prices; SIC business fro sip codes.
- If I request "personal incom 1989-1992 monthly", the database would show me what I requested data.
- Monthly commercial building permit statistics for Putnam Co. New York.
- More information by county.
- Need updated 1990 Census Data.
- Apartment (Multi-Family) Statistics.
- Information on nonresidential construction.
- Need more monthly physical output dat for manufacturing.
- Data is often no longer available at couty or regional level, which is a big loss to local government. If possible, please reinstate (eg. retail sales). Also, no-residential building permits no longer available.
- Data on residential construction; alterations, renovations and conversions; and county level mobile home shipments.
- Non-residential building permits, offices, retail industrial building etc.
- Comparative Statistics on Latin American cities. No local international service trade statistics.
- No.
- Selected salaries for selected industries & occupations.
- local wage by occupation & industry data
- New remodeling dat from American Housing Survey.

- Nonresidential Construction Dollars by STATE Highway Expenditures by STATE dat has to be timely.
- MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
- Timely release of data in an easy-to-access format (ie: XLS, 123, etc.) with revisions and option of pulling complete time series.
- Non-residential building permits--number by type of building.
- The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
- I'd love to see employment data by SIC based on place of residence. Also wish for reconciliation between RIMS, SIC, & NAICS.
- Int'l trade data on internet are inadequate. Only press releases are there. When data are revised, if data are not in the press release, there is no way to get the revisions (ex: monthly data from exhibits 6&7 of FT900).
- Number of Mobile Homes & Value of, by state, on a monthly basis. (Currently only published annually) -- Also, by county, if possible.
- 1) Monthly building permits by stats. 2) Retail sales by states & MSA's.
- No.
- Non-residential building permits--retail sales for MSA's & all counties.
- No.
- Miss the state retail sales numbers.
- More timely data.
- Commercial building permits.
- Data on non-residential construction.
- Non-residential building permits data nad value of new non-residential construction part in place.
- Combining county building permit data to MSA level would be useful.
- Monthly trade data based on export location.
- Local U.S. MSA & county data.
- Statistics on new residential construction for MSA's in more locations (e.g. all top MSA's)
- 1) NAICS to harmonized code concordance. 2) Timely plant capacity utilization at greatest detail level possible. 3) Windows version import data/monthly annual easy to use historical with full detail. 4) New Home sales (without land).
- Small area employment (place of work) estimates - current #'s.
- Location (Census Block/Black Group) of employment for employees', commutes for work between counties.
- Yes--Commercial building permits--Bring them back now!!!
- Resume geographic estimates of retail sales.
- MSA level business patterns. Estimates (updated info) on a wider range of demographic variable for counties and sub-counties.
- Current employment by #'s of employees, by SIC, by MCD, by specific employer ID only.
- Commercial Building Permits for MSA's. This program was discontinued by the Census a couple of years ago.
- Monthly Retail Sales - Nassau-Suffolk, NY MSA (Data Discontinued?)
- YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
- Building permit data at county level from Census web site.
- Would like to have detailed Boiling permit data on line. Would really like to know which census tracts correspond to zip codes (and counties).
- Commercial Construction Permit Activity
- Seasonal Population - estimates. More information on affordable housing-market.
- I would like housing dat for the State level other tan building permit data.
- State, county & local permit date for nonresidential construction. Use to get this.
- Yes-we desperately would like to have monthly dept. store sales data reports re-visited for at least top 25 metros.
- Monthly Retail Sales for U.S. Metropolitan Areas.
- BLS has great site. Well organized. Need to make it easy to find seasonal factors and benchwork.
- current retail sales
- More frequent substate mtg. stats (annual survey is state wide only)

- In general, I would like more information to be available at the county level and by place.
- One comprehensive unemployment % report including county and cities together by fips code.
- Non-residential evaluation.
- Household Expenditure Data at State Level.
- Would like "New Mobile Home Replacement Report"
- Disclosure rules limit reporting in CIR report.
- Regional retail sales (metropolitan area) monthly non-residential building permits by metropolitan area monthly.
- 1). Employment in types of projects, such as residential construction. 2). Construction productivity measures.
- We would also like to receive retail sales, wholesale trades, and manufacturing/trade inventory that if we can get it off of the web, that is fine.
- Two pieces of information that the Census Department had done in the past--metropolitan estimates of retail trade and metro commercial construction permit activity--both annual.
- Would like Government Finance series in print form.
- Relatively current statistics at the county and sub-county geographic levels.
- 1). GDP 2). Need to see how prior data releases of components affect quarterly advance.
- Better categorization of Import/Export information. It is very difficult to determine how much of some of our products were imported or exported.
- Non-residential construction that was deleted from current const. series.
- Want monthly retail trade by state & MSA back.
- Non-residential Building permits.
- Housing stats and completions by state, MSA Value of construction put-in-place by state, MSA
- Yes, Non-residential permits and regional retail sales.
- More extensive time series!
- Using CPS-online. The current terret use does not allow for cross-tabs and sub-group data collection.
- Need more detailed annual data for 6 digit SIC codes
- Remodeling Permits by county
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Geographic data by product class, especially in county business patterns. Totals at the 4-digit industry level aren't detailed enough.
- Expenditures for non-residential construction, especially non-residential reconstruction.
- Utilization of data for merging with Atlas GIS. Convert landview to include information down to Block level.
- I would love something like census lookup for building permits and imports & exports.
- Monthly housing inventory by metro area.
- Make data reports easier to print off of the web.
- Average expenditures per residential improvement project for single family homes by region. Average value for residential permits by region.
- Move capital expenditure data--more frequent, more detailed
- Monthly exports by state's origin of productions by product. (highly disaggregated). Monthly each states' imports by county of origin by product.
- Housing Starts by State; Retail Sales by State
- Website is extremely difficult to navigate.
- Non-residential permits!!
- The annual survey of manufacturers needs to be in ASCII or pdf format; as well as pdf. We spend too many hours re-entering the data.
- Crime--not all areas of the U.S. participate in their state uniform crime reports program, so it becomes difficult to make informed decisions.
- Need more timely delivery of C-50 data (Res. Improvements). There is no contemporary measure of remodeling activity.
- Non-residential permit data still unavailable. This is incomprehensible as SBA loan guarantees continue to shovel out money.
- Permits for non-residential by place.
- Median income and poverty tables are not in spreadsheet form (they one were).
- Non-residential new construction and renovation

- Current local (county) data on any of the following: retail sales.
- We would like to see more economic data and analyses at the state & MSA level.
- Rent data and vacancy rates.
- Would like mapping for Censtats Local Permit Office boundaries.
- MSA retail sales
- Monthly service sector sales counterpart data st to retail, wholesale, and manufacturing shipments.
- Under question #1, would probably use more of the data but do not receive it.
- Permits for remodeling and non-residential construction.
- Population Projections
- The more history, the better.
- Commercial, Industrial, and other non-residential construction put-in-place!
- Immediate posting of data revisions when significant revisions are undertaken.
- Non-residential construction data outside California! Bring it back!
- Data at the metropolitan area level, e.g. retail sales, commercial building permits (office, industrial, retail).
- We have a need for long historical time series and for long-term forecasts.
- Far better data on service sector; tons of coverage. Need data on enterprises as well as establishments.
- Information about how well the ACES programs capture new business formation and business deaths.
- Housing Stats monthly by state, city, county (same as building permits).
- small area data
- More immediate access to most current export & import data.
- Yes, Census reports for all construction, not just residential.
- Rates for rental housing-by state.
- sub-national retail trade
- Timely business indicators for MSA's.
- Building permits for non-residents.
- Commercial Building Permits County level on a timely basis.
- Census bureau data by county: retail sales, housing starts, manufacturing stats, imports/exports, new home sales.
- Non-residential building permit data collection should be restored by state and metro area!
- Building permits by state other than housing. Other state wide (as opposed to metro area) data such as starts and completions, retail sales,etc.
- Commercial building permits, Commercial real estates sales.
- As a foreign academic library, we are concerned about cost of access.
- I very much regret the termination of the state and metro area monthly census of retail trade several years ago.
- Estimates of coverage by county for building permits better state and local data.
- Report on productionn of industrial fabrics
- Just wish more data were available at county or metro level in a timely fashion
- Yes-I need non-residential construction series (commercial, industrial, etc.) on a geographic basis-as used to be done!
- Yes! I would like to be able to download permit data by state by month via the Internet. It should be cheaper than \$20 per disk per month & handling fee.
- Very disappointed that non-residential building permit data is no longer being tracked--our models rely on this!
- Building Permit data are not as complete as before - Rental vacancy rates & rental would be helpful.

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#### IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

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(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

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51.1%; 201 4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)  
42.0%; 165 Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade  
38.9%; 153 2-digit major groups  
32.6%; 128 3-digit industry groups  
17.8%; 70 NA (don't use SIC-based data)  
2.3%; 9 Other

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Replies 393; Forms 426

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- 7-digit in some cases
  - Greater detail when available
  - The greatest level available--CIR level. Product level.
  - Name of Industry & # of employees
  - I don't use this much, but others in the agency do!
  - Would like to have 6 or 7 digit SIC
  - We create the confidential data from url records.
  - D & B's 2+2 system 8 digits
  - Use SIC categories extensively
- 

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

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34.3%; 139 I was unaware of this  
28.4%; 115 I am partially aware, but lack details  
37.3%; 151 I am aware and understand some implications

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Replies 405; Forms 426

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12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

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93.3%; 265	A brochure that explains NAICS	29.6%; 84	Conference announcements
58.5%; 166	NAICS implementation plans	3.2%; 9	Other

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Replies 284; Forms 426

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- Comparison-SIC VS. NAICS Similar to when SIC definitions change.
  - Disk that has SIC/NAICS Conversions
  - The reference book of classifications
  - Contacted by local information office fo Bureau.
  - A manual and numerical list
  - Disaggregate SIC for each sector.
- 

(27) No Thanks -

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70.7%; 87 I will check the Census Bureau's web site ([www.census.gov/naics](http://www.census.gov/naics))  
29.3%; 36 I don't need more information about NAICS

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Replies 123; Forms 426

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## V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

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(28) 13. Type of organization.

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42.3%;	176	Business	3.1%;	13	Media
27.6%;	115	Government	0.7%;	3	Regional Planning Commission
14.4%;	60	Academic/Research	0.2%;	1	Library
5.8%;	24	Association	2.6%;	11	Other
3.1%;	13	Individual			

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Replies 416; Forms 426

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- Information and consulting firm
  - Quasi-Gov't
  - Consulting
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Economic Development
  - Economic Development District State Data Center depository.
  - Building Material Manufacturer
  - Consultant
  - Library (University)
  - University
  - Corp. Library
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(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

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24.5%;	99	Yes	75.5%;	305	No
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Replies 404; Forms 426

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(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

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70.7%;	287	None	0.5%;	2	Affiliate
11.3%;	46	State Data Center	0.5%;	2	Affiliate Data Center
3.9%;	16	Business/Industry Data Center	0.5%;	2	Affiliate of State Data Center
3.2%;	13	Census Information Center	8.4%;	34	Other
1.0%;	4	State Data Center Affiliate			

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Replies 406; Forms 426

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- SDC Affiliate
- Affiliate of the State Data Center
- Philadelphia Regional Office
- user of Census data
- Affiliation with SDC
- Special Sworn Employee
- Under the Mi State Data Center
- Associate Stat Data Center
- Federal User
- State Data Center Affiliation
- Data Center Affiliate
- Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
- Census Liason
- Technical Assistance Center
- Depository
- BDC affiliate
- Fund the CIR-MA35N
- Regional planning agency.
- Research Center

- Economic Development Distirct State Data Center depository
- DOC Staff
- Former State Data Center
- Data use.
- Affiliated w/SDC & BIDC
- Heavy user
- GPO Depository
- Local Census Affiliate
- Trade Association
- BEA, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Client
- Associate Data Center
- We send Census Reports per county bldg. permits
- Consumer of housing data
- Federal Depository Library

(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

81.1%; 314 Yes

18.9%; 73 No

Replies 387; Forms 426

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

- It would be nice to have all reports available in spreadsheets format. For any publication reports that contain large tables and data, mdb file format would be an ideal too.
- We greatly appreciate this survey. I'd like to stress one major concern we have: As you move toward complete Internet delivery of data--please continue to publish "hard copies" of the economic reports for us to compare as backup. We have noticed that occasionally there are errors in Electronic Bulletin Board and Internet files--so we rely on the hard copy as backup. We use it as a safeguard. Thank you and feel free to contact me at your convenience.
- Cost is often a fator with the use of Census information. Ideally, the Census Bureau could position itself similarly to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. BTS does an excellent job of disseminating transportation-related information. It would help researchers throughout the country if Census could apply the BTS template to its sociaeconomic data.
- The Bureau of the Census has done a great job with it's web sites. Wth the exception of some unpublished data, everything is available through the internet. The unpublished data is received by direct e-mail.
- I find the Census Bureau web site very helpful in conducting market research. The current level of data available is excellent and I look forward to new additions.
- 1). I cannot say that this is pressing, but I would like to see the results of the state-level retail trade series. 2). I need data files that are easily read into software such as SAS and SPSS. I also tend, when I am looking for somethin, to require as much history as I can get, because that is what is demanded of me. It would help me a great deal if all federal agencies that release dat (especially Census, BEA, and BLS) would release an actual data file (e.g. GDP.DAT rather than GDP. BEA) at the same time as the press release, much as The Federal Reserve does with its industrial production notices. More history dat on CD-ROM products, such as USA Counties would sometimes be useful as well (say 1940 or 1950 if available).
- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my new off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- Joe Cantalupo is no longer in service to the County of Rockland.
- When is 1997 Census to be available? Please keep as much of the data in print as possible--  
Thanks!
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.

- Thanks for asking!
- Allow more time to respond; survey not received until two (2) days before due date.
- Over the past several months, I have begun to utilize the U.S. Census Bureau's web site, specifically the economic briefing room. I use this information in conjunction with the Kiplinger letter to keep up with marketing analysts. Having the information on the web makes it very easy to access. Thanks!
- Thank you for your great service!
- Thank you for providing these essential data. They will be even more useful if we can access and manipulate them as appears to be your intent.
- The efforts to provide electronic format data are a vast improvement over paper/hard copy publications. They have increased the accuracy and utility of the data sets.
- The level of detail varies depending on the type of data requested. Mostly county-level data is used because this is what is available.

Although the technology of the internet is available to tie up my phone line browsing for information to print out is very time consuming, whereas a printed report is much easier to access & reference. Not all government entities have the capacity to keep pace with new, faster, computer hardware & software.

- This survey was filled out by three people.
- I prefer e-mail contacts rather than phone, as I am frequently not available at my phone for extended periods.
- We used to receive from state employment agency using worker comp data lists by geography MCD; by SIC; by name of employer--the number of employees. We were well aware this was sensitive data for competitive reasons of employer confidentiality. Unfortunately, someone at another agency apparently released some of this data to the "public" and now it is unavailable--what is left is very inadequate, unsorted data--difficult to interpret. We can not do adequate community profiles by consolidated data any more. How can similar data be obtained?
- We receive building permit data on a quarterly basis, with annual reports received as a supplement.
- Keep up the good work--

1). Does table 3=CPI-U?  
on monthly reports?

- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic media will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Stat-USA is an extremely useful tool for retrieving data. I would like to see more files in spreadsheet format and the ability to download particular segments.
- Census has done a terrific job by putting so much material on the Web. Keep up the good work.
- Please contact ASAP: Bob Davidson, Gov't Information Service Section Palm Beach county Library System Service

3650 SUMMIT BLVD. 33406  
(561) 233-2600, ext. 164  
email Robert ID@PB.SEFLIN.ORG

- It's clear to me that there's more usable gov't data to be accessed for site selection and market research needs. We use data vendors typically, by passing much the Census has to offer. Where is the best web site for learning about data sources listed on p.1 of this questionnaire?
- Good job on the web site.
- I called over a year ago to ? receiving briefing permit data. We are still receiving it and not longer use it as a data source. Please cancel.
- The more information you can make available via your web site the better. Particularly at the county and place levels.

- I supervise human service planning in the statewide planning agency. Mark Brown, who is a planner that I supervise, will replace Paul Egan as director of the State Data Center next June (June 1998). We use census data regularly in the preparation of studies and reports.

We are especially interested in state housing permit data.

- Please contact me regarding how we can obtain the Monthly Imports & Exports information.
- I am disappointed that the Census Bureau has cut back on selected metropolitan data services, namely retail sales estimates and commercial building permit activity. While I understood Budget pressures, it seems that lower cost alternative could have been implemented rather than elimination (perhaps annual figures rather than monthly). It is important that the Federal govt. provides timely information that can capture the dynamics of regional growth as well as national growth on a broad level of data services.
- Sorry for the delay--the survey didn't arrive until 8/12/98.
- Would be very interested in some information available on the Internet.
- I received the survey on August 7th--so was not able to return it in the time requested!

Our office is very interested in any information on the implementation of NAICS--as our researchers will be using it a great deal.

- We still prefer to have reports generated as a hard copy for our library. If this is no longer possible, an e-mail notification service for new publications available on the Internet would be helpful.
- PDF files are big and we have to retype the data for analysis. Having raw or spreadsheet/database data would save us much time. BLS's web site is a good one to study.
- State and Local Government Finance Estimates, by State. We appreciate having this information on the Internet but wish the report was still published. Is there any way of compiling the data sooner? It is almost too old to be of any use.
- I think that this user survey is an excellent idea; you should poll users periodically.

I would be happy to participate in a users' panel or advisory group.

- Desperately need this information from NAICS. Emerging technology/company information requested everyday.
- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- Be sure that all information is made available in the most "user-friendly" manner possible!!
- Tutorials and/or manuals should be sent out with Census products. I have fiddled enough with Landview III to utilize some of its versatility. Other colleagues won't due to lack of time to waste on self-teaching (fumbling).

Landview III should allow searches down to the Block level & just empty the fields which raise concerns regarding privacy at that level.

- I would like a copy of the report developed from this survey or an explanation of why I can't have a copy.
- So far, the lookup approach has been not valuable to me. It has some limitations. CD's are my second favorite.
- I always use your data for the economic releases. My major concerns are: timeliness of data availability on web and being able to print the data from the web without having to reformat printing fonts. I also to the revisions when they come out, but often the location and structure of the revisions is confusing.
- Current setup on the web is extremely frustratingly for someone trying to print/download data and reports

-> Make .XLS files available with lots of historical data.

\_\_\_ Use .PDF files for pasting your releases -Having to flow ascii into a word processor and reformat is not the way to go. Email subscription would be helpful

- Thank you for asking. We use economic files on limited basis.
- The web site is generally very helpful a lot of information--sometimes difficult to locate information wanted.
- - Census should also provide information on Agriculture sector.

- 
- Provide up to date GSP data for status by digit SIC.
- Provide "Green GSP" data.
- We would like to make more use of Census Bureau data including using a PC to extract/manipulate, correlate data.
- I think the advancements on the Web over the past few years have been excellent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has put much of this data in raw form on their FTP site. I'd like to see the Census Bureau make the FTP site more accessible and have more information.
- We are in the site selection/economic development function. Census data is absolutely crucial to our function, especially the ability to compare areas.
- We have recently designed our data systems and upgraded software for greatly expanded local market area permit reporting. Any significant change in file/record layouts would be a disaster.
- I find the Census Website to be fairly difficult to use. It's hard to find information that I need. For example: I was trying to find tables on the number of Households & spent probably 45 minutes locating it.
- We currently do not use as much national data as we have in the past. We hope that access thru the Internet will continue to increase so that what we may need in the future can be quickly found.
- I work as a local government long range planner. My duties include socio-economic analysis as requested by the public, politicians and officials. The Census Bureau's Web Site is one of my key resources.
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- Keep up the good work. I appreciate this survey.
- More documentation and instructions for obtaining data from gohper directories would be helpful.
- I appreciate the value of your service! Educators use information for social profit.
- An ideal use of the Internet would be for Census Bureau customers to be able to set up user accounts that would allow us to save our queries and re-run them every (month, week, quarter, etc.). I would like to select one or more (including "all") MSA's.; Then select (employment, permits, retail, etc.); then select the specific data series, including time period; and then download the entire query. I have several of these queries I would like to run monthly. Thank you.
- Keep up the good work.
- I would like to get the Housing Stats for state cities of Virginia. What is cost? I am now receiving building permits by state, city, and country.
- I'd like to receive a list of publications at a State Data Center is entitled to receive on the regular basis. I'd also like to get the description for the data we receive.
- Don't know if understood fully all questions, and maybe some confusion about my answers.

But look to dat from the Census Bureau as important information to not only general business, but in possible use for publication to inform, specifically, members of the hardwood lbr business.

- If feasible, include columns heading names (labels) in spread sheets, as well as row labels. Not now done in monthly building permits diskettes and STF3-A CD-ROM, for example.
- Please consider having building permit data on a user friendly CD-ROM.
- Many of your monthly data crimes current, per month of 2 months ago but not year ago. I would be useful to have year ago and /or a full updated file with historical data. For example: new orders, inventories, etc.
- It was a mistake to exclude mobile home permits from your residential permits totals, and a bigger mistake to exclude the non-residential permits.
- Good to see this survey! Dealing with you via the Internet and mail is going well. However, trying to reach people ove rthe phone is still a major headache.
- Glad more of your publications are being made available on the Intenet! Suggestion for format of employment data-group by years first, then industry. Is there some alternative for obtaining non-residential building permits.

Figure 1: